THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) to (d) There is a marginal fall of around 2% in exports of builders hardware during the year 1997-98, which is estimated at Rs. 204.80 crores, against the performance of Rs. 209.85 crores during 1996-97.

Exports of builders' hardware are being made mainly to Germany, Kuwait, Qatar, South Africa, Spain, UK, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Canada, France, Ireland, Malaysia, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, UAE & USA. Major fall in the exports of hardware is in the case of USA, Singapore and Australia due to sluggish demand in these countries and also severe competition from some of the East Asian countries viz. China, Thailand, Korea etc. The currency devaluation in some of these countries has also made their exports more competitive.

There is no exclusive scheme for promotion of exports of hardware. However, promotion of exports of this item, like other items in the engineering sector has been the constant endeavour of the Government. Measures being taken to boost exports of engineering goods including that of hardware consist of various provisions under the Export-Import Policy including Duty Exemption Scheme, Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme, Special Import Licence, Duty Drawback Scheme, Exemption under Section 80 HHC of Income Tax Act, Assistance from Market Development Fund etc., Engineering goods exporters also receive promotional support through various activities of the Engineering Export Promotion Council.

India's Trade With Pakistan

3546. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) which are the largest trading partners of India among the SAARC countries;

(b) whether after the establishment of SAPTA the bilateral trade between India and Pakistan has increased;

(c) if so, what is the total import and export between two countries after the SAPTA agreement; and

(d) what are the steps taken to increase the trade relations between India and Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The largest trading partners of India among the SAARC member countries are Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Pakistan.

(b) and (c) The Agreement of SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) came into effect of 7th December 1995. The Flow of trade between India and Pakistan thereafter has been as below:

(Rs. Crores)

Year	Exports to Pak	Imports From Pak	Total Trade
1995-96	256.97	150.92	407.89
1996-97	558.12	128.36	686.48
1997-98	537.14	139.68	676.82

Source: DGCI&S, Calcutta.

(d) The increase in trade between India and Pakistan in presently hindered by Pakistan's restrictive policy on imports from India. India has given *most favoured nation* status to Pakistan but they have not accorded the same status to India. Pakistan is currently allowing imports from India only against a unilateral list of 595 items many of which do not have a real export potential from India. Within this limitation steps are being taken to step-up bilateral trade. Under the SAARC umbrella, both countries are exchanging tariff concessions under SAPTA and are committed to achieve the *free*

trade area within the scheduled time-frame. Pakistan have been participating in India International Trade Fairs, organised by ITPO in the month of November every year Pakistan has also participated in the First SAARC Trade Fair, held in New Delhi in January 1996 for which rent free space was provided to them. Under the umbrella of SAARC Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the members of the business community of both countries have been participating in conferences, seminars, etc. to promote economic relations.

निर्यातोन्मुखी क्षेत्रों की प्रणाली में सुधार

3547. **श्री मनोहर कान्त ध्यानी: क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:**

(क) क्या यह सच है कि उत्तर प्रदेश के राज्य बिजली बोर्ड ने राज्य के निर्यातोन्मुख क्षेत्रों के लिए प्रणाली में सुधार करने हेतु सरकार को कुछ प्रस्ताव भेजे थे;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि मुरादाबाद के लिए 8.00 करोड़ रुपए की परियोजना को स्वीकृति दे दी है;

(ग) क्या यह भी सच है कि भदोही के लिए 12 करोड़ रुपए की परियोजना, जाजमऊ के लिए 3 करोड़ रुपए की परियोजना, कानपुर के लिए 6.93 करोड़ रुपए की परियोजना तथा अलीगढ़ के लिए एक परियोजना स्वीकृति हेतु लम्बित है;

(घ) यदि हां, तो इन परियोजनाओं को कब तक स्वीकृति दे दी जाएगी, और

(ङ) यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं?

वाणिज्य मंत्री (श्री रामकृष्ण हेगड़े): (क) से (ङ) उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने निर्यातोन्मुख क्षेत्रों में ऊर्जा व्यवस्था में सुधार से संबंधित उपकरणों सहित निम्नांकित परियोनजाएं आकस्मिक बुनियादी सुविधाओं की संतुलनकारी (सी आई बी) योजना के तहत विचारार्थ प्रस्तुत की थी:—

1. कुल 20.28 करोड़ रु० की लागत से व्यवस्था सुधार योजना, मुरादाबाद।
2. कुल 35.61 करोड़ रु० की लागत से भदोही में अवस्थापना विकास।
3. कुल 10.09 करोड़ रु० की लागत से जजमऊ क्षेत्र, कानपुर में अवस्थापना विकास।
4. कुल 7.00 करोड़ रु० की लागत से अलीगढ़ में व्यवस्था सुधार योजना।
5. 7.38 करोड़ रु० की लागत से लखनऊ में व्यवस्था सुधार योजना।

सी आई बी की अधिकार प्राप्त समिति ने प्रस्तावों पर विचार किया और सी आई बी योजना से मुरादाबाद के लिए 800 करोड़ रु० और अलीगढ़ की परियोजनाओं के लिए 3.50 करोड़ रु० की स्वीकृति दी। समिति ने जजमऊ परियोजना की ऊर्जा व्यवस्था सुधार उपकरण के लिए 1.75 करोड़ रु० की राशि भी स्वीकृत की। भदोही की परियोजना के लिए अधिकार प्राप्त समिति ने सी आई बी योजना से बाबतपुर हवाई अड्डा और भदोही को जोड़ने वाली सड़क के विकास के लिए 3.15 करोड़ रु० की स्वीकृति दी है। लखनऊ की व्यवस्था सुधार योजना हाल ही में प्राप्त हुई है और अधिकार प्राप्त समिति द्वारा यथा समय उस पर विचार किया जाएगा।

Elimination of Restrictions on Imports

3548. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the European Union has urged India to eliminate restrictions on imports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the performance of Indian Economy is likely to be affected by the decision?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) The European Union had initiated consultations with India under the Dispute Settlement Mechanism for elimination of Quantitative Restrictions (QR) maintained by India for BOP reasons. After detailed negotiation, a mutually agreed solution was reached. Accordingly, India will phase out the QRs in a balanced manner, in 3 phases of 3 years, 2 years and 1 year respectively, with effect from 1.4.1997.

(c) The plan for phased removal of QRs, agreed to with the European